



THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON DC 20350-1000

JUN 10 2022

From: Secretary of the Navy
To: Lieutenant Colonel Keith C. Brenize, USMC

Subj: LETTER OF CENSURE

Ref: (a) (b) (6) Ltr 5830 of 8 Jan 2021
(b) COMMARCENT Ltr 5800 CDR of 19 May 21
(c) JAGINST 5800.7G (JAGMAN) 0114a

1. On 30 July 2020, an assault amphibious vehicle (AAV) assigned to the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) sank in the Pacific Ocean while conducting shore-to-ship movement, resulting in the death of eight Marines and one Sailor. Reference (a) examined the events leading to this tragic incident at the tactical level, while reference (b) focused on the forming and compositing of the 15th MEU, its training and material readiness, I Marine Expeditionary Force oversight, and COVID-19 pandemic impacts.
2. As the Commanding Officer, 3d Assault Amphibian Battalion, you were responsible for ensuring Marines assigned to the 15th MEU AAV platoon were trained, evaluated, and certified for deployment, and that the AAVs assigned to the 15th MEU were in an operationally sound state of readiness. Reference (a) determined required training was not completed, and the AAVs assigned to the 15th MEU were in a degraded state of readiness. Accountability for these failures rests with you.
3. The Marine Corps requires its leaders to comply with orders and to mitigate the risks inherent in training and operations. While no single decision or act led to this mishap, your decisions and acts set the conditions for this mishap to occur. Accordingly, you are censured for failing to effectively ensure appropriate levels of training and material readiness in your command.
4. A copy of this letter will be placed in your official military personnel file pursuant to reference (c). You may forward within 15 days of receipt of this letter a rebuttal consistent with reference (c), for inclusion in your official record, if you so desire.

Carlos Del Toro